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POETICAL EPISTLES,

AND

SPECIMENS

OF

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TRANSLATION.

Solet esse gravis cantantibus umbra.

VIRG. Ec. 10.

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TO

THE AUTHOR

OF THE

PLEASURES OF HOPE, GERTRUDE OF WYOMING, *&c.*

CAMPBELL! whose rich poetic fields unfold
Their full-ear'd treasures in autumnal pride,
Rustling along the mountain's stormy side,
Or rolling through the vale their tops of gold;
Or bending o'er the bright stream to behold
Their waving splendour in its limpid tide;
While all around the rays of genius glide
In shifting colours, soft, or gay, or bold:
Protect these rhymes—friend of my early years!
And I remember in that opening spring,
My tender blades like thine were green and gay,
But ah! what change some stealing seasons bring!
The mildew blighted my unripen'd ears,
Thine swell luxuriant in the eye of day!

PREFACE.

The Author of this little volume does not consider himself as a great Poet; and keeps back his name, not out of self-denial, but honest apprehension. He cares enough about his book, however, to wish his readers, if he shall find any, to understand with what views the different pieces of which it consists were composed.

The two *Epistles* which stand first, are the faithful transcripts of real observation and reflection; and having been written under the immediate influence of the impressions which they attempt to record, were thought to have some chance of exhibiting that truth and liveliness of description, and that naturalness of sentiment, for the sake of which some good-

natured readers will excuse a little awkwardness, and a good deal of inequality.

In the *Specimens of Translation* which follow, the author has not been actuated by any one uniform design,—unless perhaps it be that of setting the example of a more close and correct imitation of the style and manner of the original authors, than has commonly been aimed at by metrical translators.

In the passages translated from *Klopstock* and *Dante*, which are, on the whole, very literal, he has had it in view to exhibit specimens of that mysterious and gloomy character of thought which marks the peculiar genius of these poets. They differ much, indeed, in their manner of execution: Klopstock is very diffuse, and Dante as remarkable for conciseness; yet, if the author be not mistaken, they will be found to resemble each other very considerably, both in the general tone of their minds, and in the mingled grandeur and familiarity of their conceptions.

The other translations it is unnecessary to

particularize minutely. They contain poetry both of a gay and of a melancholy cast, but all of a character very different from that just mentioned. The *Canidia* of *Horace* may indeed be classed among tales of horror; but the genius of that elegant poet does not seem much at home in the attempt.

The *Sonnets* from *Horace* were intended to shew how naturally—and, in better hands, how gracefully—any short and classical composition may be arranged, in a form which at once ensures brevity, and unites elegance with the most varied and perfect melody of versification.

The translations from *Petrarch* are given chiefly on account of their fidelity—not merely to the meaning, but to the peculiar diction and manner of the original. The unrivalled sweetness of his measure must not be spoken of by any *tramontane* imitator.

The author has little time, and, he fears, less genius, for the labour of original poetical composition; but he is frequently in the habit

of translating such passages as strike him in the perusal of ancient or modern poets. If the Specimens now presented to the public shall meet with its approbation, he may possibly again bespeak its indulgence for some farther attempts of the same kind.

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POETICAL EPISTLES.

POETICAL EPISTLES.

EPISTLE FIRST.

FROM A SCOTCHMAN IN LONDON TO HIS FRIEND IN SCOTLAND.

Written in the year 1799.

WHILST thou, my friend, in Scotia's broomy vales
Drinkst the fresh fragrance of her vernal gales,
By rocky Carron's wildly-wooded side,
Or near the rolling majesty of Clyde:
(Where'er thou art the nymphs and shepherds throng
In pleas'd attention to thy lively song,
Quick as it changes in its easy play,
From light to thoughtful, from severe to gay,

While wisdom's brows the bells of folly fit,
And reason sparkles from the gems of wit.)
Me, luckless wretch, the while, no gale of spring
Fans as it passes on its healthful wing;
I see no streams through smiling vallies run,
No young-leav'd woods soft-twinkling in the sun.
Here with faint steps the scorching streets I tread,
While burns the brazen vault above my head;
Here stray alone where countless myriads crush,
Nor catch one eye that knows me as they rush.
Where shall I hope in London crowds to meet
The glance of friendship, with respondence sweet,
With breathless joy, to hear its accents, stand,
And join in cordial clasp the ready hand?
Ah no! my listless feet are turn'd instead,
Where some dark lane will hide my outcast head!
Happy to find in undiscover'd gloom
The friendly covert of some garret-room:
Where fancy through my dear-lov'd land pursues
Her dream, and turns to thee, and courts the
Muse!

"Stands Scotland where it did?" and dost thou yet
Recall those scenes which I shall ne'er forget
With social feet when o'er the Highland steeps
We keenly panted,--skimm'd the isle-gemm'd deeps,
Plough'd with bold bark Iona's giant waves,
And worshipp'd Nature in cathedral caves!
Each desert glen, each lake and winding shore,
Much we admir'd, but lov'd the people more:
Where'er our solitary steps might roam,
We ever found an hospitable home,
Whether the trackless breast of Mull we trac'd
Slid as we rounded Jura's marshy waist;
Or Isla's waving fields with joy beheld,
The blest Cythera where a Venus dwell'd!

O thou remember'st, shipwreck'd, soil'd, and late,
We reach'd a mansion's easy-opening gate:
Loud through the roofs the sound of revel rung,
And female voices shrilly laugh'd or sung,

The banquet-room is open'd ; at the door
We stand : at once is hush'd the sprightly roar :
Trembling we stand, and scarce can bear the eyes
That through long lashes glance a gay surprise,
Where round the crowded board the white-rob'd fair
Stretch their bright necks, and meet the taper-glare.
But kind reception soon our fears repress'd,
Again the hospitable board was dress'd :
The lovely ladies, rising to retire,
Shot from their bending eyes a milder fire,
Our sleep was lighten'd by the cheering beams,
And forms of beauty flitted in our dreams.

Bright rose the morn, and through the casement shed
Its saffron lustre on each little bed ;
Forth to the mountain-gales with joy I flew,
And sought the morning ocean's misty view ;

Where in wild bays its white waves slowly beat,
And murmuring kiss'd the green lawn's sloping feet,
Where with blue arms it clasp'd the shrubby isles,
That coyly frown'd upon its dimpling smiles;
Where 'mid its dancing gold and skirts of light,
MULL's filmy line scarce twinkled on the sight.
But ah! my eyes were much more sweetly blest,
When two fair forms the dewy verdure prest,
While different graces mark'd the lovely pair,
Margaret's mild eyes, and Christian's steps of air!

Thee, too, the dweller of a savage coast,
Another * Axylus, a general host,
Who, ever pleas'd to hear the stranger's call,
Gav'st all men welcome, for thou lov'dst them all.

See Homer's Iliad, Book vi. line 15.
Παντας γαρ φιλεεσκεν ὁδῳ ενι οικια ναιων·

The person alluded to is the late Mr Maclean of Torloisk, in the island of Mull, and nothing is here said of his kind-hearted hospitality which was not simply the fact.

Thee, and thy kindness can we e'er forget
When to thy doors, night-wandering, weary, wet
We came,—at once thy face benignant shone,
Each unknown vagrant was at once thy son.
With the good usage of the ages past
The supper first, inquiries came the last;
What was our race, and what each parent's name?
Paternal guests perhaps,—then why we came?
To brace our fibres with the Highland air,
To dig for fossils, or to woo the fair?
Say, were we foreigners who roam'd the waves,
Or sought we Staffa and her pillar'd caves?

Happy old man! through climes far distant borne,
Toss'd (as thou saidst) on ocean's frantic horn,
Thy youth had pass'd, and many a region blest
Had spread before thine eyes the lap of rest:
Yet through each change, thy true and simple mind
Still linger'd 'mid the hills thou left'st behind,

Nor wealth's soft charms could e'er thy wish engage
To seek a gentler cradle for thine age.
Happy old man! though o'er thy heathy hill
Dark rains and noisy tempests travell'd still,
Though round thee smil'd no fields of cheerful green,
No harvests wav'd, no sheltering trees were seen,
But stormy seas for ever lash'd the shore,
While Staffa's dripping vaults return'd their roar:
Yet still thine eyes the hills, the shores survey'd,
Round which thy happy infant feet had play'd;
Yet each rude scene to memory could restore
Parents rever'd, or playmates now no more;
Domestic love thy dwelling yet endear'd,
And rustic reverence flatter'd thee and cheer'd:
Yet could thy soul the purest pleasure find
Which man can boast of—to be good and kind.——
—Gone to thy fathers now! not soon forgot—
The passing sailor oft shall point the spot,

And win the stranger's careless ear awhile,
And draw his keen eye from the Magic Isle:
Oft wanderers turn their wishful looks in vain
To the clos'd mansion of the good MACLEAN!

But whither ramblest thou, my thoughtless muse?
Still wilt thou follow our romantic cruise
Heedless of all the race thou hast to run?——
—The waves were crimson'd by the setting sun,
Retiring Staffa met the ruddy rays,
And veil'd her columns in a rosy haze;
Dark isles, around the skirts of ocean spread,
Seem'd clouds that hover'd o'er its tossing bed.
By craggy shores and cliffs of dusky hue,
Scatter'd in open sea, our galley flew:
Fearful! had storms these rocky mountains beat,
But now the leaden waves scarce lick'd their feet,
And each brown shadow on the waters cast,
Frown'd smilingly upon us as we past.
From rock to rock the galley smoothly slid,
Now in wide sea, among the cliffs now hid;

Now round the skyey zone the red waves leapt,
Now in each narrow channel dark they slept.

At last Iona burst into the scene,
Reclin'd amid the evening waves, serene,
The last beams fainting on her russet green.
Her crescent village, o'er the harbour hung,
Spread its pale smoke the breezeless air along,
While from her highest mound the ruin'd fane
With proud composure ey'd the desart main.
We gain'd the bay, and trembling touch'd the land
On which, of old, religion's mighty hand,
Stretch'd from the skies and half in clouds conceal'd,
Stamp'd the broad signet of the law reveal'd.

Through cells once vocal to the monk and nun,
O'er royal tombs in grass and weeds o'errun,
Through pillar'd aisles whose sculptur'd cornice bore
The fragment-tales of legendary lore,

Our lingering feet in musing silence stray'd
Till cross and holy image swam in shade.
No sound the solemn stillness broke, except
The passing gale, or charnel vaults that wept,
Or from the ocean's dim-discover'd foam
The dash of oars that bore the fisher home.

We join'd the busy scene; in unknown tongue
They clamour'd loud, and tugg'd their boats along,
Dragg'd forth their dripping nets with briny hand,
And threw their panting treasure on the sand.
Poor fishermen! like those the Doriomuse
Pourtray'd for him * the bard of Syracuse.
Not that like his they seem'd to dream of gold:
For humbler riches they their booty sold,
Tobacco all they ask'd,—for which they gave,
With willing hand, the produce of the wave.

Such too were those we met at close of day,
In the soft light of Balachuilish bay:

* See Theocritus, Idyll 21.

A people poor but kind; their scanty store
They shar'd with a good will that made it more.
In little fishing-boat, with scales defil'd,
We cut the silvery gleam, where many a wild
And slaty promontory rose around,
And fancied Tabor * heav'd his hallow'd mound.

That day had seen us move with footing slow,
Through the long sultry windings of Glenco,
Beneath the line of grey rock high and steep,
On whose turf patches hung some straggling sheep;
(A shepherd-dog pursued them up that wall
Tremendous, echoing to his master's call:)
While proud opposing cliffs, projecting vast,
Drear shadows o'er this narrow valley cast,
Where the once-tuneful Cona silent past.

* Dr Pococke, when travelling through this country, pointed out one of the hills above Balachuilish, as bearing a striking resemblance in its form to Mount Tabor, and the anecdote is still cherished by the interesting nationality of Celtic piety.

Feather'd with wood, their sides, long gullies seam'd,
And from their towering tops the shooting eagle scream'd.
There, as one cot in the low vale we spied,
A little cultivated spot beside,
Some children playing at the lonely door,
While from the cliffs was heard the torrent's roar,
And through the vista of the opening hills,
No other cottage-smoke was seen for miles,
We paus'd, and thought how strange the contrast here
With all we knew, with what ourselves we were,
Mid scenes of smiling beauty rear'd, and found
Where still a common nature breath'd around.

Yet more deserted of all life that lives,
Thy calm, Glenroy! to pensive fancy gives
The past as present;—o'er each hanging road
When thy Fingallian heroes rush'd abroad,

And drove the deer, and rais'd the hunter scream,
Where now is heard alone thy brawling stream.
Or if a voice still sounds along thy wild,
'Tis of some mountain-girl or bright-hair'd child,
Home wandering with the cluster'd nuts, they press
On passing stranger,—frank in bashfulness.

How deep thy still retreat, O Laggan lake!
Who yet will hide me in thy birchen brake?
Where thy old moss-grown trees are rotting down
Across the path, as man were never known;
Where thy clear waters sleep upon the shore,
As if they ne'er had felt the ruffling oar;
Where on thy woody promontory's height,
The evening vapours wreathe their folds of light,
While from their driving fleece, the torrents flashing
Down the rude rocks in long cascade are dashing!
O you would think on that lone hill that none
Had e'er reclin'd, save the broad setting sun!

Yet here the musing steps of genius roam
From neighbouring Paradise of love and home:
That gifted Spirit whose descriptions warm,
Paint Highland manners, every mountain-charm,
By the green *tomhans* of this fairy wood,
Nurses her glowing thought in solitude!

Ah! yes, from dream by rock or haunted spring
I see thy eagle Genius spread its wing,
O my lov'd country!—See the virtues rise
In the keen bracing of thy northern skies:
(The vision cheers my soul, escaping free
From city roar to nature and to thee!)
I see thy sons where'er the day-spring warms,
Pluck the first laurels of the arts and arms:
(Sent from their hills and cottage-homes afar
To plough the waves,—to rule the ranks of war.)
Thy blooming daughters bright in beauty shine,
While wisdom lightens from their eyes divine;
And all the wise and good, a sacred band,
That with a ring of glory gird thy land!

I see thy Stewart lead the ardent youth,
Through all the fancy-flowering walks of truth,
In Academic bower with Plato rove,
Or muse with Bacon in some solemn grove:
Thy Alison attractive, pure, refin'd,
Shew matter brilliant from the torch of mind;
Clothe in mild rays religion's brow severe,
" And make persuasion do the work of fear."
I see, where science points a steady beam,
Thy Watt in grasp of genius fetter steam;
O'er the wide field of knowledge spread his soul,
Compare, remember, comprehend the whole:
(Ah! doom'd his Black and thine too soon to mourn,
While friendly Robison enwreathes the urn!)
See, the quick sense of Hume, the solid pith
And searching sure sagacity of Smith,
(The one, immortal even as England's tale,
The other, nam'd where'er she spreads a sail)

Meet in thy Millar, with the sportive air,
And light vivacity of gay Voltaire:
From his long labours see Monro retire;
Thy Gregory's hereditary fire:
Thy Playfair, deeply sage, yet plain to please,—
Think, reason, "write, converse, and live with ease:"
Thy rapt Joanna wake the tragic tone
And every mother bless thy Hamilton:
Mackenzie's moral, Tytler's classic page:
Thy Blair's, thy Beattie's, venerable age;
And Home's pale ghost slow gliding from the stage*!

This enumeration of the worthies of Scotland might have been made as long as Homer's catalogue of ships; but the author has confined himself merely to the mention of several of the most distinguished of those who were alive when the epistle was written. Of these, alas! some have since joined their illustrious predecessors,

——— and in the silent tomb
Are now no more than Robertson or Hume!

These are thy riches, Scotland!—grac'd with these,
Scoffers may spy thee naked as they please,
Paint, if they will, the hut we found in Mull!
A Noah's ark of animals choak-full;
Three or four children tumbling on one bed,
The woman with the bushy carrot-head,
Who squatted by the fire upon a stool,
Suckling a child, and carding greasy wool,
Her ferret-eyes half hid and parchment hide
Amid the smoke, that pour'd on every side,
And only at the door could find a vent;
The raw-bon'd wench who through the hovel went,
Now, drawing long threads from the larger wheel,
Now, cooking o'er the fire their fishy meal;
While puppies, kittens, rats, and mice, and chickens
Hopp'd round the hearth, and gather'd up the prickings.

O, to the eye of prejudice alone,
In giant size these little specks are shewn!

But from thy weary wing, my muse alight,
Where wouldst thou yet pursue thy venturous flight?
O think not now, the dungeon vaults to search
Of Gothic Glammis: or on the rock to perch,
Whose shapeless bulk, by rounding billows worn,
Dunnotar's sun-gilt battlements adorn.
O stoop not now above the cauldron dark,
Ere Buchan's pitchy waves imprison'd bark:
Not now on Elgin's tumbled masses sit,
And muse on wild religion's frantic fit:
Or man forgot, and man's distemper'd dreams,
Fly not where Ness pours down her dancing streams;
Not now, o'erjoy'd thy wandering pinions wave
Around the shores her lake delights to lave;
In frolic play its liquid mirror skim,
Unmov'd, or trembling o'er its pebbled brim;

Or from the noon-day's burning rage retreat
Where hanging oak-trees shade some rocky seat,
There through the quivering leaves survey beneath
Its lucid waters wind their wood-girt wreath;
Or catch the cloudy spray thy lips to cool
That smokes from Fyar's dark resounding pool.

Another song for these—another song
For scenes thy happy eyes shall view, ere long,
When Caledonian seas, once more descried,
Their rich poetic treasures open wide.
Soon shalt thou hear the angry billows howl,
Where all the Orkneys stop them as they rowl.
From isle to isle thy winged feet shall leap,
Nor pause till perch'd on Kilda's distant steep,
The last fair daughter of the western deep.

Ah! yet thou wilt not linger,—yet I spy
The restless roll of thy prophetic eye,

Quick as it wanders o'er the wide expanse
Of earth and sea with bright and trembling glance.
What land so blest its shifting beam to stay?
It looks, it smiles,—but turns at last away:
Hesperia's classic vales and hills among
It pauses mild,—yet will not linger long:
It seeks, it seeks the isles, the shores, the streams,
Where first it open'd on the morning beams,
When to the Delphic steep thy cradle clung
And all Hymettus on thy lips was hung:
There as its looks of love delighted fall,
In laughing lustre swims its swelling ball.
Ah! yes, thou yet shalt find thy native vales,
Where first thy tresses caught the lifting gales,
In loose-rob'd dance when down some Attic mead
Thy choral sisters thou wert wont to lead.
Yet, proudly walk by Ilium's desert shore,
And dream thine ancient inspiration o'er,
And Homer's shade with throbbing bosom hail,
Or seek the slumbers of some Lesbian vale,

Where wanton breezes waft on dying wings,
The last faint murmurs of thy Sappho's strings!

O! *****, is it true? and shall we yet
Follow the muse with never-parted feet
Through these blest scenes poetic? Shall we walk
Along the plains of Marathon, and talk
Of ancient virtue? Shall we keenly climb
The rocks that overhang the straits sublime,
And, tearing fragments from them, fiercely throw
The thundering ruins on the vale below,
And crush in fancy the barbarian crowd;
Then bid the mountain-echoes answer loud,
As waving wide our arms, with throat of brass,
We shout Leonidas, Leonidas!

Say, shall we find the Persian's towering seat,
Whence with proud eyes he view'd his monster-fleet,
Winning with heavy wings its labouring way,
As dark it winded round the patriot prey?

" Our sires, our wives, our children," was the shout,
(A poet* heard the words of fire burst out,
And made their echo spread the wondering world about.)
The magic watch-word thrill'd through every breast,
And instant havoc smote the bloated pest!

How will imagination riot there!
Then to the banks of Nile we shall repair,
With spirits more compos'd, and trace the roots
Whence genius spread through Greece her generous shoots.

See Eschylus, in the Persae.

Και πασην ὁμυ κλυειν
Πολλην βοην, ω παιδες Ελληνων ἰτε
Ελευθερουτε πατριδ', ἐλευθερουτε δε
Παιδας, γυναικας, θεωντε πατρωων ἑδη,
Θηκας τε προγονων. Νυν ὑπερ παντων αγων.

Like good Herodotus our way explore,
Still sifting something, though believing more;
Well pleas'd some fancied theory to build,
And gain in wonder what in truth we yield!
Nor can we there neglect each modern chance
Where late the Gallic warrior dropt his lance,
Check'd the mid current of his conquering fame,
And chang'd for Cæsar's, Alexander's name:
Where late the British thunder heard to roar,
Our Nelson dyed with blood Aboukir's shore.

"O foolish youth! (methinks I hear thee say)
Whe[illegible]wilt thou wander in thine idle play,
Thy brightest thoughts, a fever'd dream at most,
And all thy rambling rhymes at reason's cost?
Urge not so fierce this war on sober sense,
Nor buy repentance at such vast expence.
Be not the moth that round the taper turns,
Pleas'd with the dangerous brightness till it burns—
The child that plays him where the viper lies,
Drawn by his rattle and his diamond eyes!"

Most wise and fine!—but what is it you dread?
" Faith! that this poesy may turn your head."
Indeed! 'twere best to stop then—" to be sure,
Better prevent that malady than cure.
Go read the fathers, turn a grave divine,
Leave Campbell, the seraglio of the nine!"
O could I sing like him! " Still running on?"
One word, my friend, one word, and I have done.
" Well, well, proceed"—Like him diffuse my soul
O'er one wide scheme, and draw a varied whole;
Now speak in softest, now sublimest tone,
Mix styles unlike, yet make them all my own,
Skilful in each the middle line to trace,
Simple with splendour, eloquent with grace!

Thou too, my friend, if such thy warm design,
Might'st number each poetic beauty thine:
(Thou first didst teach my muse to speak with ease,
Who if she pleases, learnt from thee to please.)

Thy song might yield to none of modern days;
But whose now gains the pinnacle of praise?
Who now can soar on Milton's wing sublime,
Beyond the flaming bounds of space and time,
Through heaven's high halls his lordly thunders roll,
And shake all hell beneath his mighty soul?
Who now with Shakespeare pierce the heart of man,
Each floating wish, each half-form'd purpose scan,
With all its lighter humours crowd the stage,
Bid all its tempest passions melt and rage;
Or, wildly wandering through the fields of air,
Make some light cloud its looser touches wear,
(New wildering phantoms all about us rise,
Yet scarce seem strangers to our dizzy eyes)
While from her lap attendant nature showers,
Round all his varying walks her liveliest gems and flowers!
O these were poets! with invention fir'd
Beyond whatever Greece or Rome admir'd:

Bards, heroes, statesmen, keen philosophers,
Ne'er bore a genius of such grasp as theirs!

Others there are with less gigantic claim,
Yet high o'er all the later born of fame.
Such Dryden—who now boasts his careless skill?
Easy at all times, breathing fire at will:
Not every phrase select, but scarce a line
Without some touches of the hand divine:
A Proteus-mind replete with images,
Still on the watch some new strange shape to seize,
And seize what shape he will, secure alike to please.
Who shall inherit, say, (fantastic hope!)
The pointed fine propriety of Pope;
Goldsmith's pathetic truth, Gray's Gothic pride,
Or all the Grecian glow of Akenside?
Alas! we now have no such strains as those:
Cowper is rude, and Southey sometimes prose;

Not but we own their beauties numerous too,
Descriptive, natural, for the most part new:
Nor yet deny that Darwin's syrup stile,
Intoxicates the fancy for a while,
But we soon sicken with its oily flow;
Who, pray, would twice get drunk upon noyau?

No, friend, where'er we try the muse's hill,
Some happier genius soars above us still:
Nothing to me,—although perhaps 'twere best,
I quietly should lay me down and rest;
Yet I might be allow'd, no doubt, to crop
Some unambitious flowers, knew I but where to stop.
With thee not so—thou wert not born to wait
A common courtier in the room of state,
Mimicking majesty amid the ring;
Thou must be minister, if not the king.
If neither, quit the court's corrupted air,
Or make slight bows of ceremony there.

" Well, what's all this to me?" O! nothing, Sir,
You from the country are scarce known to stir,
An oracle among your rustic friends,
Have Burns's Justice at your finger-ends,
Kill your own mutton, with the parson smoke,
And hear him preach sometimes, and oftener joke:
Right, not to seek a low and vulgar name,
But wrong, to yield no sacrifice to fame.

'Tis vain to talk of inspiration now,
Poets spring up the Lord knows whence or how:
Some dreaming habits, taste, a trick of rhyme,
Will make no paltry poet, give him time.
This is not genius—this is not to sound
The depths of science with a skill profound,
From the first stone-cast in the savage mind,
To catch the broken circlings of our kind,
With rapid reasonings pierce each weak pretence,
And spread o'er all the blaze of eloquence.

Such are the powers that make men half divine
Or in the schools or senate fit to shine,
A Smith's, a Burke's, a Tully's—why not thine?
Equal to *all*, why *no* proud honours seize?
Is it philosophy or love of ease?
The last,—unworthy of an active mind;
The former?—yet philosophers we find,
Panting for fame beyond all humankind.
Ask not the reason—hunger makes men eat,
The thirst of praise impels them to be great.
Suppose a strong man lose his appetite,
The doctor knows at once all is not right:
Have we high talents and neglect applause?
Some sickly fit, depend on't, is the cause.
O, yet be known, my friend, yet nobly soar,
And let thy country boast one glory more.

Then shall my muse (she has no higher aim)
Deck out thy trophies, and inscribe thy name,
An humble herald, on thy steps attend,
And only proud that I was call'd thy friend.

EPISTLE SECOND.

Written in the year 1808.

We leave the groves, then ———, and hie
Where heavy smoke involves the troubled sky,
Quit the pure air, the field's enlivening green,
The budding hedges, and the woody screen,
The flowery plot before our mansion neat,
The Castle-rock, and towering Arthur-seat,
Behind, the Gothic dome's sequester'd view,
And Pentland's long line softening into blue!

No more our wandering walks shall trace at will
The sunny slope of Blackford's heathery hill,
Whence as across the wide and swelling down,
We caught the prospect of the humming town;

No wish had we to fix our sojourn there,
Delighted rather that we could repair,
And hide our heads beneath the fringing shade,
Which skirts the peaceful hermitage of Braid!

Our little William now must run no more
To see the soldiers from the garden-door,
No more the mimic club his hands must hold
An ardent golfer, only two years old!
And baby Charles's opening mind must meet,
The rushing chariot, and the crowded street!

'Tis well! yet 'twas not thus their parents first
On nature's sheltering bosom long were nurst!
To thee, my ——, she kindly gave
The boundless ether, and the dashing wave,
The batter'd castle frowning on the deep,
The fall'n cathedral higher up the steep,
And many a walk, at morn and evening, o'er
The sweeping smoothness of the sandy shore!

Come! bright illusion, to my dreams again;
Restore each hill, and well remember'd plain!
Come! with thy genial glow as when of old,
Before these eyes my native river roll'd,
When with light feet I left my father's hall,
And up the woodlands trac'd its broken fall,
Pleas'd, as I ran, the glancing leaves to spy,
Or bird on dropping wing that flitted by;
Pleas'd, the shrill chorus of the woods to hear,
And river-murmurs thickening on mine ear,
Till with quick step I burst the thicket glade,
And saw the sunbeams light the high cascade!

Sweet scenes! although these eyes have wander'd since
O'er many a spacious bower of peer and prince,
Amid your beauties they can still espy,
What with more vaunted splendour well may vie;
Nature in you her happiest form exprest,
And taste's correcting hand supplied the rest.

That blessed hand, which, with a gentle sway,
Led my first steps in virtue's peaceful way;
Whose equal balance, vice could scarce forbear
To own, whose bounty warm'd the widow's prayer;
That hand on you its signature imprest,
Each fair idea of the owner's breast,
Chastis'd your wilderness, your wants remov'd,
Gave woods to grow and barren wilds improv'd:
That still he lives (though mouldering in the dust)
In you, and in the memory of the just!

Nor has thy memory perish'd, Judge rever'd!
Who long the helm of Scotland's justice steer'd,
Whose public mind, with moral beauty fraught,
Glow'd with the patriot plan, the patriot thought;
Blest still from courts and cities to repair,
To thine own happy hermit-haunts of Ayr!
There, in the depth of rocks and woods, to find
The God who loves the lover of mankind!
There, by thy side and hers (one note of praise
To the wise guardian of my childish days,

Who mourns thee still!) how often have I stray'd,
Or run to hide me in the pine-grove shade,
Or roam'd with trembling joy, the wood-hung caves
Cut in the cliff above the dusky waves,
Or from the lofty arch, in musing dream,
Mark'd the slow pebble break the curling stream.

Thy green hills, Moffat, and thy streams that shine,
Rise on my thought and claim the tribute line,
What time my suffering sister went to drain
Health from thy springs, but ah! she went in vain!
Slow was the poison sapp'd her early bloom,
And long her vista of the opening tomb.
Yet when from pain her steady soul was free,
Who more alive to simple joy than she?
How did she love to tread thy pastures fair,
To breathe the freshness of thy mountain-air,
In summer-eve to seek each sunny spot,
The gooseberry-garden, and the shepherd's cot;

There too I rambled, and with lifted eye
Gaz'd on the hills, in childish ecstacy!

Wilt thou, my ———, indulge the strain,
Which thus recalls my morn of life again?
Yet wilt thou follow where thy steps I guide
A school-boy now, along the banks of Clyde?
Beneath the slope where high the orchard grows,
" The village preacher's modest mansion rose."
I seem to see the *burn* that round it steals,
The fronting ground whose turf the dead conceals,
The homely *kirk* long nodding to its fall,
The grey stone-coffin on the church-yard wall!

Free as the gales, and early as the dawn,
Forth did we fly along the level lawn,
When sacred call the master sent away,
And gave the happy summer-holiday!
Some, lightly sped where on the orchard steep,
The shaken apples fell in pattering heap,

And lent their busy aid to gather in,
And fill'd their pouches too—a venial sin!
Some, by the river-bank as gaily far'd,
And held deep converse with the laughing *laird*.
Some, to the glen with nut-hook in their hands,
Telling their tales the while, in merry bands,
Drew the brown cluster down with breaking crush,
Or stain'd their lips with brambles from the bush.
Some, more retir'd (and I might be of these)
Lay on the wild bank, 'mid the hum of bees,
Reading some legend old of Scotish fame,
The Bruce, the Douglas, and each warrior name
Then homewards with the setting sun, to hear
The solemn evening duly clos'd with prayer!

O why should pleasure youth's wild eye allure
From nature's guardian arms to scenes less pure?
Why should our manhood be ambition's slave,
Or creep the drudge of avarice to the grave?

Why should the sun on man's unconscious gaze,
Pour from the eastern hill his living rays?
Or why his softening splendour gild the west,
Nor raise one wish that such may be our rest?
Ah! far at sea, and wanderers from the shore,
Nature still calls us, but we hear no more!
Yet where her pensive look reflection throws,
Remember'd forms of beauty yield repose;
On them, she pauses, and with filling eye,
Plans the blest refuge of futurity!
Thus to the scenes in which our childhood past,
Memory returns with love that still can last;
Wherever, since, our vagrant course has been,
Whatever troubled hours have come between,
Those simple beauties, which could first engage
Our hearts, still please through each succeeding age;
Nor are they yet so sunk in meaner care,
That nature's image quits its impress there!

Ay me! this erring mind too long essay'd,
In dark abstraction, wisdom's promis'd aid;

Too long immur'd in college cell I lay,
And gave to fond illusion youth's lost day;
Yet would I sometimes, stung by holier rage,
Quit the cold reasonings of the sceptic sage,
Throw in disorder'd haste my books away,
And down fair Isis cut my rapid way,
The verdant riches of her meads admire,
Gaze as I pass'd on Yeoffly's Saxon spire,
And stay my little skiff, and freely rove
Thy green banks, Nuneham, and thy rooky grove!

Or when still evening brought her shadows dun,
Wrapt in my sable stole I lov'd to run,
Where Magdalene's groves indulg'd my musings free,
Or sate by Pullen's solitary tree:
Thence would mine eye the under-scene survey,
The woody screen, the towers and turrets grey,
Cherwell slow-winding in his misty robe,
And dim-descry'd the astronomic globe,

As deeper still the growing evening fell,
And rose by fits some distant chapel bell,
Till the fair moon, emerging on the night,
Threw over spire and stream her shadowy light!

Nature, thy hand was on me, when I broke
The cloister spell, and like a giant woke,
Burst the dull bonds of indolence, and sought
The Cambrian mountains in romantic thought!
In glorious independence forth I strode,
Alone, on foot, and on an unknown road;
Blest when I left the fertile plains, and found
Sky all above me, hills on hills around.
Long days I travell'd far and unconfin'd,
Gazing on clouds, conversing with the wind;
Sate by the mountain-stream, and joy'd to see
All nature great in savage liberty!
Few words essay'd, the native pass'd me by,
Unknown to both the question or reply;
Yet did I love to mark his simple guise,
And lov'd the fire that sparkled in his eyes.

Fair was the sacred morn, the streams were gay,
Thy vale Bethgelert cross'd my lingering way:
Above thy little huts, high Snowdon tower'd,
And clouds that wreath'd his summit smil'd and lour'd.
The rustics pass'd in many a well-dress'd pair,
All reverent sought their lowly house of prayer,
And chaunted their wild hymn, which in mine ear
In "still small" whispers told that God was here!

O yet, methinks, I tread the brilliant strand,
Where the wide sea-born river parts the land,
Rolls in the light of setting suns, between
Caernarvon's walls and Mona's druid scene:
The softening sky with many a fleecy bar
Is cross'd; and now peeps forth the evening star,
And now, in moonlight, Mona's cliffy side,
Seems a white Venice towering 'mid the tide.

O yet I seem upon thy mouldering scaur
To hang above the waves—huge Penmanmaur,

Where sweeping from wide sea, their circlings blue
Lave thy iron base, and kiss its dusky hue.

Conway! thy ruin'd castle bound my feet,
And thy blind minstrel with his harping sweet,
Which seem'd repeating still, in rugged strain,
The curse of Edward for his brethren slain!

'Mid softer scenes, my eyes at length repose,
Hagley's calm evening shades around me close:
I felt my cheek with patriot passion burn,
As the last sunbeam died on Thomson's urn:
Thy green walks, Shenstone, white with morning dew,
And rills poetic pleas'd my pausing view,
And long I linger'd, lost in hallow'd dream,
By Shakespeare's hovel and his Avon stream!

These feet have stood where Skiddaw's pointed height
Soar'd into storm, or gleam'd in azure light:

O'er the wide sea of summits, sun and shade
Varying the mountain-views, alternate play'd;
While mists before the wind, strange spectres cast
Upon my wilder'd vision as they past.
Lo! Derwent's dark blue, gemm'd with islands fair,
Seems chang'd to sky and cloud, and hangs in air;
One moment! then, the vapour driving by,
Smiles the smooth lake below, reflecting cloud and sky.
O ye rude rocks, not then your caverns rung
To the wild harp by copious Southey strung;
Nor Coleridge to the wondering rustic throng,
Pour'd his rich tide of eloquence along;
Then echo heard alone, on fell or shore,
The bleat of lambs, the murmurs of Lodore!

Can I forget the hallow'd hour I past
In Grasmere chapel, in the lonely waste,
Driven by the rains that patter'd on the lake,
(Perhaps no holier cause) repose to take?

The simple people to each separate hand
Divided, youths and maids in different band;
Of the great power of God, their pastor spoke;
Responsive from the hills loud thunders broke,
From the black smoking hills whose wavering line
Through lead-bound panes was dimly seen to shine.
I felt the voice of Man and Nature roll
The deep conviction on my bending soul!
What if, amid the rural tribe, unknown,
From Wordsworth's eye some moral glory shone,
Some beam of poesy and good combin'd,
That found the secret foldings of my mind?

Yet not in solitude I roam'd for aye,
Friends too were mine and many a social day.
One yet remembers our light revelry,
When Warwick Castle echoed to our glee;
Like barons bold when to its moat and arch,
And court of waving pine—we took our march;

Gaz'd on the warrior forms upon its wall,
And pac'd the grandeur of each Gothic hall.

Another—still recalls the hours I staid
By Darley's yew-trees, Matlock's hanging shade.
But where is *he*—once seen and never more!
With whom the hellish cavern * to explore,
I wrought my weary way the ledge beneath
Of low-brow'd rocks, and pass'd the stream of death—
Then rose and star'd on the gigantic tomb,
While twinkling taper gleam'd upon the gloom:
Where does he wander now? perhaps the road
That leads indeed to death, his feet, alas, have trod!

O can I pass *thy* Christian dwelling by,
Where man was taught alike to live or die;
Curate of Ormskirk! round that humble door
Bleak were the winds—the sandy common poor!

* The cave at Castleton, in Derbyshire.

Yet on thy task of love I found thee bent
Rich in good works, with faith and hope content!
There didst thou feed a sacred flock, that felt
Full on their souls thy warm expressions melt:
Thy faithful vigilance no toil would spare
To frame the youthful heart to praise and prayer.
While vice from neighbouring city steam'd abroad,
One rescu'd people here remain'd to God!

Nature and friendship both conspir'd to guide
My way through Devon's rich and blossom'd pride,
Where dreary Cornwall's ever-lengthening line,
Romantic rocks, and sweeping glens confine.
There lives my friend, "from towns and toil remote,"
There his fair Mary claims a lover's thought;
Still young their loves when I was from them torn,
And the first pledge of marriage still unborn!
How free from care ran on our summer's day,
He angled in the brook, I wove my lay,

Soothed by its murmurs, in some rocky den,
Or musing wild, in high Polweveril glen:
And oft his verse detain'd the listening stream,
While Sport and Nature were his favourite theme.
Then on our home-return, the mistress neat
Brought out her creamy stores to rustic seat,
Where, as the evening breezes round us play'd,
And the red sunbeams glow'd along the glade,
Wanted not friendly talk, nor laughter light,
Nor social song, while fell the stealing night!
Cornwall! although, my memory still explores
Thy rocks fantastic, and thy woody shores,
Climbs with the classic youth thy guarded mount*,
And hears his strain, from Milton warm'd, recount
Its wizard wonders: still expatiates free
Thy bays majestic, and thy tossing sea,

* St Michael's Mount—See Milton's Lycidas—
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks tow'rd Namancos and Bayona's hold.

Yet gentle friendship (lighter claims o'erpast)
On fair Constantine ever rests at last!

But what are Cambria's mountains, Cornwall's floods,
Rich Albion's vales and lakes and crowded woods,
To my own native land? from her, my strain
Began, to her rejoicing turns again,
And thee, my ———, whose genuine mind,
Free from all sickly dreams, misnam'd refin'd,
Owns no sincerer rapture than is given,
By the green lap of earth and azure heaven!
Witness the vale, where Tweed's clear current flows,
And Dryburgh's woody bower, and fair Melrose!

How laugh'd thine eyes, when from the bushy dell,
Where sunk in shade retiring Leader fell,
Our wheels slow wound us up the open height,
Whence Tweed's rich valley burst upon the sight.

Below, the river roll'd in spreading pride,
The lofty arch embrac'd its auburn tide:
Bright in the orient gleam the waters shone,
Here flowing free, there ridg'd with shelving stone:
Each side the banks with fields and trees were green,
High waving on the hills were harvests seen,
The nodding sheaf mov'd heavily along,
And jocund reapers sang their morning song:
Calm slept the clouds on cloven Eildon laid,
And distant Melrose peep'd from leafy shade.

How mild thy thoughtful look, when evening pale
Stole on our steps in Kelso's happy vale!
Dim was the light on Tweed's broad bosom thrown,
One silvery beam on Teviot's windings shone;
From the low rocks thick wav'd the dusky wood,
And dipp'd its large leaves in the rippling flood,
While some lone bird its latest descant pours
From Ednam's river-bower, or thy grove, princely Fleurs!

Nay, ———! the task were much too hard,
To trace the footsteps of the border-bard;
Leave we fair Melrose to her happier lot,
My feeble voice pursues no lay of Scott!
Sooner yon bird in evening shade that sings
Might face the eastern ray on eagle wings!

O bear me rather to the secret shore,
Where hermit Gala winds his waters hoar
By grassy steeps, or brown with broken clod,
Or where from jutting knolls his wild woods nod:
O hide me rather in the pastoral mead,
Where yet unsung bounds on the youthful Tweed!

Dost thou, my ———, still call to mind
(When "Peebles to the play" we left behind,)
That morn, when clouds were out, and drizzly shower,
Silent we past old Nidpath's gloomy tower!

Around the river sweeps in spacious bend,
Thin stunted pines th' opposing steep ascend:
Black was the dismal pile, in horrid shade,
While yet the watery beams on steepled Peebles play'd.
The varied views a mix'd emotion raise,
But deeply mark'd with Scotland's feudal days!

O ancient land! that day we saw thee still
In many a furrow'd vale and heathy hill,
In many a rivulet rambling carelessly,
Even like thy sons, irregularly free,
In many a dreary castle dash'd with rain,—
Saw thee unchang'd thy rugged front retain,
In patriot pride forgot all later claims,
And bless'd the soil of Douglas and of James!
O native land! yet was it sweet to know
Thy genius, now can happier wreaths bestow!
One sate beside us grac'd with power of speech,
A wavering senate to persuade and teach:

Beneath us lay the bower where, heaven-inspir'd,
With her lov'd Stewart, wisdom sate retir'd;
And deep in glen to foot profane unknown,
Still burn'd a Roman soul in Ferguson!

Thou too, wert with me, clinging to my side,
Fearful to stir above the falling Clyde,
Where from its height the bending river pours,
Twists its proud strength, leaps from the rocks, and roars:
High flies the spray, and dips the dripping wood,
And brown below foams forth the fretted flood.
Even he, the youth, on far Columbia's shore,
Who heard Niagara in thunders roar,
Own'd that his native scenes had features bold
As those, where nature triumphs, uncontroll'd.

Thou too, wert with me, where the western sea
Meets the clear sky with glassy surface free:

Where Ailsa's high cliff melted into blue,
Where Arran's mountains frown'd with iron hue,
Where Bute's low shores were bright in harvest pride,
Where the small Comries gemm'd the winding tide,
Where on the shore beyond, a mountain pile
Seem'd gathering storm, thy giant brood, Argyle!

O ———, had health then wav'd her wing
O'er thy glad steps, and breath'd a second spring,
All had been well—and all will yet be well!
Trust my prophetic voice, which loves to tell
Of future days, when our two boys shall grow
Beneath thy care, (may heaven ordain it so!)
In arts or arms to gild their name aspire,
More wise, more valu'd, better than their sire,
With filial hand their mother's griefs assuage,
And be the solace of her honour'd age!

Then let us teach them not to haunt alone
The sordid town: be nature to them known!
Her fostering hand the generous wish will raise,
And warm their Scotish blood to Scotland's patriot praise!

SPECIMENS

OF

TRANSLATION.

TEMPTATION OF JUDAS.

TRANSLATED FROM

KLOPSTOCK'S MESSIAH.

TEMPTATION OF JUDAS.

FROM KLOPSTOCK'S MESSIAH.

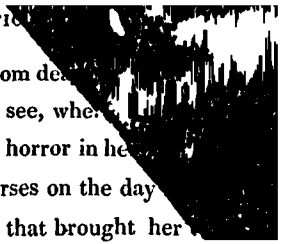
Borne down with sorrow, the disciples slept
In the close covert of the olive hill:
Some, where an olive tree its branches dipt
Low to the ground, with shadow deep and still;
And others, where the shelter'd valley fell
Along the little mount; or where, aloft,
Some Heaven-aspiring cedar wav'd at will
Above them, from its green top murmuring oft
Calm sounds, and dropping dew, and dropping
slumber soft!

Others again, betook them where were built
Sepulchres for the prophets, by that bad
And murderous city, to atone its guilt:
Judas Iscariot here his shelter had

Near his companion Lebbeus, from his sad
Impatient spirit seeking rest in sleep.
But from a den hard by, infuriate, mad,
Satan broke forth, and, in his malice deep,
Of that poor caitiff's soul a fatal hold did keep!

So, in the midnight tide, doth Pestilence
Surprise a slumbering city; on its wings,
Spread o'er the walls, Death sits, and blows intense
His breath pernicious. All is peaceful! things
Of deep research, the watchful student brings
Before his nightly lamp; and warm friends sit
Around their wine, while each to other clings,
And taste the feast of soul, the flow of wit,
In roseate arbours: Life! what need they fear for it?

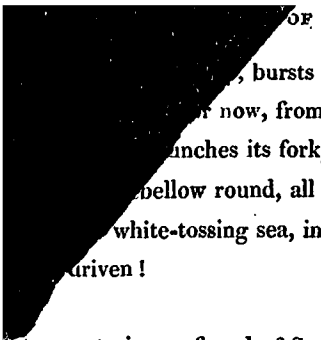
Ah! the foul demon will, ere morning hour,
Shake his wings o'er them, and the day will rise
A day of wail and dying groans! From bower
Of marriage, see, the bride with piercing cries



Laments the bridegroom de
Wringing her hands: see, whe
Of all her babes, wild horror in h
Shrieks, and heaps curses on the day
The womb: the days that brought her
infant gift!

See, with deep hollow eyes, from corse to corse
The grim assistants move, nor cease until
From troubled skies looks down (with dull remorse
Clouded his brow) of Death the angel ill,
And now beholds all desert, lonely, still,
And meditates upon his victim graves
In fixed thought!—Thus on Iscariot fell
Satan, and, to seduce his fancy, weaves
A dream, and on his brain the dark impression
leaves.

Ah! soon did sin his beating heart entrap!
As 'mid his crowding thoughts, with fire and storm
The fiend leapt in: e'en as, the thunder clap
Pealing aloud, on some high hill-top warm



, bursts the bolt: alarm
now, from darkening Heaven
nches its forky form.
bellow round, all rudely riven;
white-tossing sea, in one wild tempest
riven!

The mysteries profound of Seraphim,
Vast images that stir the souls of men,
Thoughts of eternity, in brilliant stream
Satan could yet suggest: (O deeper, then,
For such abuse of good, his future pain!)
There, as he lay above Iscariot,
Ithuriel came, with purpose to remain
Near the disciple, and, with anxious thought,
To watch beside him;—seeing where the fiend had got,

He stood, he trembled, and look'd up to God
For aid. Resolving, then, to rouse from sleep
The wretched man, thrice on the pinions broad
Of winds that through the grove of cedars deep

Swept, he reclin'd, and o'er his cheeks did sweep:
Thrice did he cross him in gigantic pace
That at his footfall shook the rocky steep:
In vain! Iscariot lay, with cold pale face,
In deathlike slumber, and the seraph left the
place.

Now in a dream his father seems to gaze
On the disciple; comfortless, dismay'd—
And thus, with trembing palsied utterance, says,
" Sleepst thou, Iscariot, here all careless laid
So far from Jesus, as if not afraid
To lose his love? He hates thee, while the rest
Who round his steps have still submissive staid
He loves! Why not yet seek to be possest
Of his regard? And was it thus I left unblest

Thee, in my last hour? God! What was my
crime?
Or on my race what curse is visited?
That from the shades my ghost must upwards climb,
And for my son, and his disasters dread,

Be doom'd to weep? Ah, thinkst thou, poor misled
Fond man, that, in the Mediator's rule
To be erected soon, thy outcast head
Shall rise to honour? Thou art but the tool
Of Peter and the sons of Zebedee, thou fool!

These are the lov'd disciples; these will rise
Upon thy fall! On them the Master's hand
Will pour in streams his kingdom's every prize:
And for the rest some brilliant lot is plann'd,
Far, far exceeding thine—for thou art bann'd!
Come, I will let thee see this mighty reign!
Follow me; shrink not; be not thus unmann'd
Judas!—Behold yon mountain's endless chain
That stretches out its shadow o'er the fruitful plain.

Within, abundant as the glowing womb
Of Ophir, gold inlays its bounteous mines!
The valley through each hallow'd year to come
With wealth and bliss o'erflowing, he designs

The seat of his beloved! lo! where shines
A vineyard clustering o'er its hanging hill:
In that most pleasant place have fallen the lines
Of John his chosen:—and where corn fields fill
The meadow, Peter's heritage is spread at will.

Seest thou the riches of that royal land?
Behold yon city's high and fenced pale,
With a most kingly aspect of command
Spread like Jerusalem along the dale,
Its proud towers glancing in the sun. Nor fail
To mark what countless multitudes are there!
See, a new Jordan winding through the vale
With its clear waters bathe that city fair,
And underneath the walls in healthful stream repair!

See where (another Eden) gardens hang
With fruit its shores, gleaming in sands of gold.
There are the pleasures, that, without a pang,
Shall crown the blest; these are the realms they hold!

But seest thou, Judas, in the distant wolde,
That narrow rugged land, bleak, hilly, waste,
With thorny brushwood grown, stony and cold?
There thy eternal heritage is plac'd
In solitude; no fellowship thy hours shall taste!

Except the night birds, that, with screaming loud,
Pierce the thick forests of a thousand years!
And night will ever sit on weeping cloud,
O'er the accursed soil, which nothing bears,
While ever, in each ragged den, appears
The ice-sheet, and the drift of northern snow!
Alas! despis'd disciple, to thy fears
Picture the day when the eleven go,
In royal state, nor mark if thou art there or no!

Proud triumph on their brows! they pass thee by!
Judas! thou weepst in spite and noble rage:
But what avail thy gushing tears, or why
Give way to thy despair? Thou mayst assuage

Thy woes, if thou wilt lend an ear to sage
And friendly counsel, if thou wilt not leave
Care of thyself,—but manfully engage
The crosses of thy fortune to retrieve!
Hear me, my son: a father, sure, will not deceive.

Thou seest, Messiah has, with strange delay,
Deferr'd redemption, and his promis'd reign:
Now, that our Lords brook not the destin'd sway
Of king from petty Nazareth,—is plain:
Therefore they plot his death with busy brain.
Dissemble, Judas!—make as if thou wouldst
Betray him where the priests have set their train:
O think not I advise thee that thou shouldst.—
No, spite of all his hate, no dark revenge thou
broodst.

Put thus, thou mayst incite him at the last,
Wearied with their pursuit, to prove his might.
So his long look'd-for kingdom shall be plac'd
Secure upon that unattempted height,

Where it will thenceforth ever stand upright:
Then shall his enemies, in foul dismay,
Before him fall to earth, pale with affright!
A powerful Master thou wilt then obey,
And win thine heritage upon an earlier day!

III

No mighty prize in sooth! yet, if possest
In time, thou mayst, by labouring the soil,
Make it resemble more the portions blest
Of thy companions!—not to name the spoil
With which the thankful priests will pay thy toil
In their behalf!—Such the advice I give:
Look on me, son,—From what dost thou recoil?
Thy pale dead father's face,—none else, believe!
Only, in tenderness to thee, the shades I leave.

I come in dreams to guide thee to thy good.
Thou wak'st! O listen to my warning voice;
List to thy father, that, in his abode
Amid departed ghosts, he may rejoice!"

So, as the vision clos'd, did Satan rise!
E'en as a mountain swells where once was spread
A plain; but down amid the trembling noise
Of earthquake,—down the neighbouring vales have fled,
Into the boiling waves,—it lifts its horrid head!

Judas awakes, and springs with starting bound!
"Ah! is it so indeed? I knew it well,
My father's voice; I heard the very sound:
And such his look when death upon him fell!
Then I am hated? E'en the dead can tell
What my prophetic soul still shunn'd to own!
But, what if this same dream be fram'd in hell?
Shall I, amid the faithful, be alone
Found faithless to Messiah?—Scruples! hence, begone!

I long for wealth, for eminence; I long
For my revenge! Then why, my soul, refrain
From instant action? Dreams, with hallow'd tongue,
Proclaim that right, which else might seem a stain:

Revenge is now made holy!" These words, plain,
Fell upon Satan's ear, who, swoln with pride,
Gloried to see the captive in his chain.
With one indignant glance his prey he ey'd,
Then darted his wild fiery look from side to side.

So doth the cliff of high o'erhanging hill
Frown on the surging sea, and at his base
Behold, from shipwreck'd bark, the corses wheel
Amid his whirlpools! Yet his iron face
The thunderbolt shall strike, and, from his place,
Dash him deep-plung'd into the main, no more
The terror of the seaman: his disgrace
Rejoices all the islands round; each shore
Claps its loud hands, responsive to the thunder's
roar!

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

HORACE

AND

OTHER ANCIENT POETS.

HORACE'S FIFTH EPODE.

THE WITCH CANIDIA.

I. 1.

"MERCY, mercy, blessed powers!
Ye guardians of the human race!
What means this rout? why fiercely lowers
On me, on me each savage face?
By thine own dear babes, if e'er
Lucina listen'd, woman, to thy prayer,
By this vain robe that trails its purple state,
By Jove, who will avenge, though late;
Say wherefore bent on me that stepdame scowl,
Why like a beast that feels the hunter's spear,
On me thy cruel eyes incessant rowl?"
So cried the boy with lips of quivering fear:

O! fiends of hell that pity's touch could scorn,
When from his innocent limbs the radiant robes were torn!

II. 1.

By the magic cauldron's fire,
Canidia stands and brews the charm;
Her ragged locks in many a spire
Roll with the circling snaky swarm.
Baleful yew and cypress shade,
From gloomy mansions of the dead convey'd,
The egg of toad obscene, with bloody spot,
Feather from nightly raven got,
Into the boiling broth the sorceress pours,
The bone purloin'd from bitch with hunger fierce,
And many a drug which from their poisonous shores,
Iolcos and Iberia wide disperse.
Meantime, her rough hair bristling like the boar,
Sagana sprinkles hell-dew on the blasted floor.

III. 1.

Fell Veia lifts the spade,
No soft remorse has she,
She labours groaning o'er the heavy soil:
The pit of torment see—
The grave, the grave is made!
There must the living boy in wretched toil,
Sunk in the cold earth to the chin,
Like swimmers pois'd upon the flood,
There must he watch the oft-renewed food,
The long long day, while hunger tears within.
There as his glaz'd eyes gaze the wished feast,
Must they at last in dizzy darkness sink;
Then shall the witch pluck from his bloodless breast
The parched liver for her amorous drink.
The savage band, on every hand,
Now gather round the buried youth,
Among the rest, the fiendish pest
(If neighbouring Naples knows the truth)
Folia, whose voice with wild Thessalian tune,
Can charm the stars from heaven, can charm the
labouring moon.

I. 2.

Biting now her horny thumb,
Canidia bares her livid jaw:
What are the forceful words that come?—
"Ye who to full perfection draw
Secret rites of sorcery,
Diana, mistress of the silent sky,
And night, sole witnesses of deeds like mine,
Now, now be present, now incline
Your instant aid; turn out your angry power
Against the hated mansions; he is there
Hoary adulterer, e'en at this late hour
When the wild prowlers rest in forest laire.
Bark at him, dogs, where'er he roams, bedew'd
With those same essences my artist hands have
brew'd.

II. 2.

What is this? my potent spell
To thine Medea shall it yield?
Thou bad'st thy lord a proud farewell,
Smiling upon thy conquer'd field:

There the dying princess lay
Wrapt in the gifted robe, a venomous array.
No herb in earth's most stony entrails bound,
But this my searching hand has found;
Yet I am left, for every harlot-flame.
Has some more skilful sorceress set him free?
No, Varus, no, I will not lose my aim:
There yet are potions that will conquer thee!
Let heaven in ocean sink, and earth o'erturn,
I care not, this will do, this cup shall make thee
burn."

III. 2.

Again, the boy begins:
No more in plaintive sound;
He knows their impious breasts to pity steel'd;
Revenge he breathes around:
" Yes, witchcraft bravely sins,
But it may not confound what fate has seal'd.
I yet will track you, horrid crew,
With all the furies in my train,

(Their persecution never is in vain)
When dead I will, I will pursue:
Yes, I must die, but still my nightly ghost
Shall plough your wrinkled cheeks with crooked fangs:
Shall on your labouring breasts assume its post,
And scare the slumber on your lids that hangs,
In fury loud, the thronging crowd,
With showers of stones shall on you burst;
Unburied, bare, the birds shall tear
The wolves shall gnaw your limbs accurst.
Ah, my poor parents, doom'd to mourn your boy,
Yet when the vengeance comes, your hearts shall taste of joy!"

TRANSLATION OF A CHORUS

IN THE

PHENISSAE OF EURIPIDES:

In the two first Stanzas of which, a resemblance is attempted to be traced to a noted Passage in Shakespeare.

GRIM visag'd war, wherefore do blood and death
Than merry meetings more thy temper suit?
Why labour still for the victorious wreath?
Nor rather capering with nimble foot
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute,
Join wanton nymphs in their delightful measures,
Their brows with garlands bound; like clustering fruit

While o'er thy front are shook its youthful t ea-
sures?
Ah no! these sportive tricks are not among thy
pleasures.

In dreadful march and with alarum stern,
Thy mailed warriors thou dost love to lead;
And now their bloody way the Argives learn
To Thebes:—Thou, mounted on thy barbed
steed,
Boundest before them o'er Ismenus' mead,
To where the fearful adversaries pour,
Seizing their hung up arms, with frantic speed
Unto the walls, and people every tower.
Dark, dark the clouds above our royal house that
lower!

O woody hill, within whose leafy pride,
The monsters of the forest have their laire,
Cithaeron! wherefore from thy snowy side,
Didst thou restore that infant of despair,

Jocasta's child, expos'd to perish there;
And wherefore from thy caverns send that worst
Of monsters, Sphinx, with face of virgin fair,
And wings, and bestial feet, in furious burst
Upon our walls, to vex us with her songs accurst?

Sure Pluto gave that fury to the light,
Rear'd amid shades of hell to be the bane
Of the sad race of Cadmus; feud and spite
Rage now (another woe) between those twain,
The sons of Oedipus, whose double reign,
From evil sprung, can never come to good:
How should they wash away their native stain,
That in the very fountain taints their blood
From vile commixture rais'd, a bad incestuous brood?

O land! thy warlike people sprung of yore
(So to my foreign ears the story came)
From teeth of spotted serpent on thy shore,
By Cadmus sown, and splendid is thy fame!

When fair Harmonia lost her virgin name,
The guests of heav'n to grace her nuptials crowd,
Amphion struck his lyre with hands of flame;
The walls of Thebes rose to the music loud,
And where her rivers meet, towers rear'd their
foreheads proud.

Embattled towers on Dirce's sacred side,
Where winding through the rich and grassy field,
It joins Ismenus' waters as they glide.
Most ancient land! fam'd Io's womb did yield
The horned Io, those who erst did wield
Thy sceptre, and thy name made known afar:
Till these sad times with all fair honours seal'd,
With all those blessings that most valued are,
The copious horn of peace—the glorious wreaths
of war.

SONNETS FROM HORACE.

HORACE, BOOK I. ODE V.

"*Quis multa gracilis,*" &c.

WHAT graceful youth whose dewy ringlets breathe
Their essenc'd sweets, Pyrrha, mid roses laid
Lascivious by thy side, seeks to persuade
Thy melting charms, some blissful bower beneath?
Whom now to please, thy bright locks dost thou wreathe
Easy in simple grace? Ah! soon to fade
Thy faith and all his joys, while storms invade
The blackening waves which little he foreseeth!
Who trusting to thy soft and golden hour
Ever unoccupied and kind as now,
Hopes thee, nor doubts the fair and flattering breeze
New victim of thy false smile's magic power.
For me, the pictur'd wall declares my vow,
Wet from the wreck, no more to tempt the seas.

HORACE, BOOK I. ODE VII.

"*Laudabunt alii,*" &c.

Rhodes, Mitylené, Ephesus, the port
Of sea-beat Corinth, Bacchic Thebes, the shrine
Of Phœbus Delphi, Tempé's shades divine,
And that illustrious city that pays court
To Pallas, virgin queen, (what leaf will sort
On some poetic brows, Olive! with thine?)
All gain the meed of many a tuneful line;
And Juno's honour'd Argos, and the court
Of rich Mycenae! Yet nor Sparta's fame,
Nor the full harvest of Larissa's mead
My panting bosom, like thy lesser name
Sounding Albunea, and the torrent speed
Of Anio, and Tiburnean groves, inflame,
Whose streams soft stealing the gay orchats feed.

HORACE, BOOK I. ODE XI.

" *Tu ne quæsieris,*" &c.

'SEEK not to know, Leuconoe, ('tis forbid!)
What day the gods have fix'd of final doom
To me or to thyself; neither presume
By skill to calculate what heaven has hid:
Best still to meet cheerful what may've betid;
Whether Jove send more seasons, or the tomb
This winter, ere yon waves cease to consume
Their idle strength, raving the rocks amid.
'Learn the true wisdom, short life not to lose,
Vainly employ'd the flattering dream to weave
Of endless hope, and let wine drown thy sorrow.
E'en while we talk, our stated time pursues
Its envious speed; therefore not joyless leave
The day thou hast, trusting the dubious morrow.

HORACE, BOOK I. ODE XXIII.

"*Vitas hinnuleo,*" &c.

CHLOE, thou runn'st from me like the young hind,
That, doubtful of its mother's long delay,
Courses her o'er the mountains desart way,
Though oft with vain alarm looking behind:
For not a vine's young tendrils to the wind,
With noisy foliage undulating play,
And not a lizard moves the brakes away,
But its heart leaps, and trembling knees scarce find
Their onward steps. Yet with no fell intent,
Like savage tyger, or like lion strong,
Do I pursue thy gentle limbs to tear:
Then let thy fluttering heart softly relent,
Thy mother has possessed thee now too long,
A lover better suits thy ripen'd year.

HORACE, BOOK I. ODE XXXII.

" Poscimus si quid," &c.

O LYRE, if vacant in the leafy shade,
We've us'd thy ministry in many a strain,
Not speedily to die, come yet again,
And let the Latian song thy chords pervade;
By him of Lesbos first harmonious made,
The warrior bard, who on the tented plain,
Or thrown ashore dripping from the rough main,
Still pour'd the lay with thy all-powerful aid
In praise of Bacchus and the heavenly nine,
And made bright Venus and her boy his theme,
And sang his black-eyed love with locks of jet;—
O shell, soft-trembling in the hands divine
Of Phœbus, at the feasts of Jove supreme,
Sweet nurse of care, favour thy suppliant yet!

HORACE, BOOK III. ODE XII.

" Miserarum est," &c.

Poor dears, I pity you at home who sit,
And all your lives without a lover pine,
Allow'd, perhaps, a-day one glass of wine,
And dread like death some old aunt's scolding fit!
Thou, Neobule, thou hast dar'd to quit
(Such is the winged archer's power divine!)
The tedious loom, the distaff's endless twine,
Now since the blooming boy, Hebrus, thy heart has smit:
A youth more graceful on his fiery steed
Than he that rode the courser of the skies,
Whether he gain the racer's dusty meed,
Or in the chace bear down his panting prize;
Whose rapid feet outstrip the winds in speed
Like his? whose arms so sinewy o'er the billows rise?

HORACE, BOOK III. ODE XIII.

"*O fons Bandusiae,*" &c.

FOUNT of Bandusia, crystalline, most pure,
Worthy wine-offerings, and the flower-wove wreath!
To-morrow, vow'd to thee, a kid beneath
The knife shall bleed, whose swelling brows mature
Bud with their primal horns, and seem secure
Of future fight, and love already breathe
Wanton: Vain presage! for he soon in death
Shall stain thy streams with ruddy drops impure.
Thy icy streams the dog-star's burning hour
Afflicts not; in their cool the toil'd ox laves
His scorched sides; thy shades refresh the flocks.
Fame too is thine, if aught the poet's power
Who sings thy dipping oaks, romantic caves,
And prattling rills light-leaping from their rocks.

ODES FROM ANACREON.

ODE I.—Θελω λεγειν, &c.

Agamemnon, Menelaus,
We would gladly sing of you,
But the lyre will not obey us;
Its constant tone
Is love alone:
I tore the strings and fitted new;
'Twould not do.
Away the rebel lyre I cast,
And on another
Boldly struck the combats glorious
Of Alcides still victorious:
'Twas like the last;

For yet the tone
Was love alone.
Why, why, attempt the fire to smother?
Since love alone
Will be the tone,
Heroes, kings, adieu, adieu.

ODE II.—Φυσις κερατα, &c.

DAME nature, to her offspring kind,
Gives to the bull, his horned brows,
The steed, a hoof alert in blows,
The hare, her feet of wind
The lion, jaws that never know control,
The fish to swim,
The birds in air to skim;
To man unconquerable might of soul.
Woman no doubt,
Is quite left out!

Woman forgot?
No she is not;
Beauty is woman's lot:
Why should a shield be borne?
What need of keener spear?
She need not fear.
She unalarm'd,
In beauty arm'd,
Laughs fire and steel to scorn.

ODE IV.—Επι μυρσιναις, &c.

On bed of flowers,
In myrtle bowers,
Let me lie and drink away:
Love himself shall hand the cup,
His flowing garments gather'd up,
My little page so gay.

Life's chariot wheel won't stay,
It stops not flying
Till it leaves us lying
Cold in the clay.
Then you come,
Shed vain perfume,
And deck with wreathes my senseless tomb!
O bring them, bring them now,
Anoint my hair,
With rosy garlands bind my brow:
O kindly give
While yet I live,
Give, to my arms the willing fair:
Yes, yes, I know
That I must join the shades below:
O Cupid, but I shall not die of care.

ODE VIII.—Δια νυκτος, &c.

CHEER'D with wine, I slept the night
On a bed of purple bright,
And my dreams were gay and sprightly:
On my tiptoes I pursu'd,
All as quickly as I could,
Pretty girls sporting lightly:
Standing near, some boys divine,
Blooming as the god of wine,
Mock'd my idle love-delusion;
I turn'd to chase the rogues away,
Meantime the girls would not stay,
And I awoke in this confusion:
All were gone!
Left alone,
I wish'd that sleep again,
Would free me from my pain,
And give my dream a sweet conclusion.

ODE XI.—Λεγουσιν ἁι, &c.

THE women say,
Anacreon you're grown old,
Your hair falls away;
Take a glass, behold,
Your forehead is bare:—
For my hair,
It may go, or it may stay,
I know not, nor care:
This I know, and will declare,
That an old man acts precisely
As he ought to do, and wisely,
Prizing life and love the dearer,
As his end approaches nearer.

ODE XII.—Τί σοι θέλεις, &c.

O THOU little noisy thing,
What then shall I do to thee?
Shall I clip thy darting wing,
Or,—let me see;
Wer't not best to slit
Thy tongue as Tereus did?
Swallow, has't forgotten it?
Why with these early screams
Force open mine eye-lid,
And chace the dear delusion of my dreams?

ODE XIX.—Ἡ γῆ μελαίνη, &c.

THE earth drinks the rain,
The trees drink it again,

The seas drink the breeze,
The sun, the seas:
The moon drinks the sun;
My friends have done;
Shall I alone
Drink none?

AN ODE OF TYRTAEUS.

'Tis not the speed of foot, the power of limb,
In my account that will complete the man;
Not though a Cyclop's size and strength to him
Were given; the Thracian wind though he outran;
Not though Tithonus' goodly form he can
Excel, or Midas in his heaps of gold:
Though in his veins the blood of Pelops ran,
Or from his lips Adrestus' periods roll'd:
Not though all praise were his—without war's virtues bold.

He, he alone will stem the tide of war,
Who unappall'd can look on blood and death;
Who from his en'my's side is never far:—
This is true valour, this the blooming wreath

Which looks so lovely, whosoever seeth
The young man wear it: for the common good
He toils, when firmly fix'd he never fleeth;
But reckless of his life and of his blood,
Where the first warriors fight hath ever fought and
stood.

O! if he fall beside some comrade brave,
War's beauteous garland still will deck his brow,
When he has turn'd at length the battle-wave,
And crush'd the stubborn phalanx of the foe:
O! if he fall by no inglorious blow
Full in his breast, and in his bossy shield,
Of him it shall be said, "He was laid low,
His sire, his people in the gory field
Defending!" this, will fame and consolation yield.

Him shall the young, the old, lament with tears,
Him the whole city mourn with strong desire;
His tomb, his children, through all coming years,
And all his future race, shall men admire:

His name, his glory never shall expire!
Immortal shall he be, though laid in earth,
Who in the front of battle felt the fire
Of noble deeds; whom Mars himself led forth
To fight for his dear land, and who from him had
birth.

But if he 'scape the shaft of slumbrous death,
And carry from the field a splendid name,
The young and old will join to form the wreath,
Which to his latest hour shall fix his fame:
To good old age he will remain the same,
Honour'd among his tribe; and none shall dare
To do him wrong, from justice or from shame:
To do him grace who will not quit the chair?
These are war's glorious meeds—for these your
souls prepare!

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

PETRARCH AND DANTE.

SONNETS FROM PETRARCH.

PETRARCH, BOOK I. SONNET XIII.

" Movesi 'l vecchierel canuto, e bianco," &c.

The aged Pilgrim journeys from his home,
His happy home which lengthen'd use endears,
And leaves his fearful family in tears,
Who see his white hairs hastening to the tomb.
Yet all intent, before that final doom,
To prove the pious zeal his bosom bears,
Though wearied by the way, though worn with years,
He travels onward to the shrines of Rome,
(His old limbs strengthen'd by the willing mind,)
And seeks the image of that Holy One,
Whom soon he hopes to join in heaven above.
Even so, alas! I look at times to find
In other forms, (as far as may be done),
Lady, thy beauties which alone I love.

PETRARCH, BOOK I. SONNET CCXIV.

" O dolci sguardi, O parolette accorte," &c.

O GENTLE looks, O words of heavenly sound!
Shall I behold you, hear you once again?
O waving locks, that love has made the chain,
In which this wretched ruin'd heart is bound!
O face divine! whose magic spells surround
My soul, distemper'd with unceasing pain:
O dear deceit! O loving errors vain!
To hug the dart and doat upon the wound!
Did those soft eyes, in whose angelic light
My life, my thoughts, a constant mansion find
Ever impart a pure unmix'd delight?
Or if they have one moment, then unkind
Fortune steps in, and sends me from their sight,
And gives my opening pleasures to the wind.

PETRARCH, BOOK I. SONNET CCXV.

" Io pur ascolto, e non odo novella," &c.

STILL do I wait to hear, in vain still wait,
Of that sweet enemy I love so well:
What now to think or say I cannot tell,
'Twixt hope and fear my feelings fluctuate:
The beautiful are still the marks of fate;
And sure her worth and beauty most excel:
What if her God have call'd her hence, to dwell
Where virtue finds a more congenial state?
If so, she will illuminate that sphere
Even as a sun: but I—'tis done with me!
I then am nothing, have no business here!
O cruel absence! why not let me see
The worst? my little tale is told, I fear,
My scene is clos'd, ere it accomplish'd be.

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XIX.

" *Sennuccio mio, benche doglioso, e solo,*" &c.

O FRIEND! though left a wretched pilgrim here,
By thee though left in solitude to roam,
Yet can I mourn that thou hast found thy home,
On angel pinions borne, in bright career?
Now thou behold'st the ever-turning sphere,
And stars that journey round the concave dome,
Now thou behold'st how short of truth we come,
How blind our judgment and thine own how clear!
That thou art happy soothes my soul opprest.
O friend, salute from me the laurell'd band,
Guitton and Cino, Dante, and the rest:
And tell my Laura, friend, that here I stand,
Wasting in tears, scarce of myself possest,
While her blest beauties all my thoughts command.

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XXIV.

" Gli occhi, di ch'io parlai si' caldamente," &c.

THE eyes, the arms, the hands, the feet, the face,
Which made my thoughts and words so warm and wild,
That I was almost from myself exil'd,
And render'd strange to all the human race:
The lucid locks that curl'd in golden grace,
The lightening beam that when my angel smil'd
Diffus'd o'er earth an Eden heavenly mild:
What are they now? Dust, lifeless dust, alas!
And I live on! a melancholy slave,
Toss'd by the tempest in a shatter'd bark,
Reft of the lovely light that cheer'd the wave.
The flame of genius, too, extinct and dark,
Here let my lays of love conclusion have;
Mute be the lyre: tears best my sorrows mark.

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XXXIII.

"*Valle che de' lamenti miei se' piena,*" &c.

VALE, whose sad echoes my complaints repeat,
River, whose streams are troubled with my tears,
Ye watery tribes, which the swift current bears,
Ye savage beasts, and birds with voices sweet;
Air, that my sighs have fill'd with amorous heat,
O pleasant path, that now renews my cares,
O sweetest hill, that now the livery wears
Of grief, where love yet leads my 'custom'd feet:
You, you are still the same: How chang'd, alas!
Am I, who from a state of life so blest,
Am now the gloomy dwelling-place of woe!
'Twas here I saw my love: here still I trace
Her parting steps, when she her mortal vest
Cast to the earth, and left these scenes below.

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XLII.

" Zefiro torna, e'l bel tempo rimena," &c.

On sprightliest wing Zephyr again returns,
Scatters sweet flowers and stirs the budding grove,
Now Progne prates, and Philomena mourns:
Now universal spring pours from above!
Laugh the gay meads, the sky serenely burns,
His daughter answers to the smiles of Jove;
Air, ocean, earth, through all their utmost bournes,
See every living creature wake to love.
To me, to me, alas! sighs only come,
Deep sighs, which from the bottom of my heart
She fetches, who has made the heavens her home:
What are the songs of birds, or flowers that start
From the fresh fields? they will not chace my gloom;
No, not even woman's smile, and dear bewitching art.

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XLVII.

" Tutta la mia fiorita, e verde etade," &c.

THE blooming summer of my youth was past,
And now my heart felt a relenting flame,
As to life's downward slope my footsteps came,
And took the path which vanishes at last:
Now my enchanting foe was coming fast
To view my love, suspicionless and tame,
My griefs but serv'd her for goodnatur'd game,
Charmingly playful, as correctly chaste.
O! that sweet time was nigh when love makes peace
With virtue; and two lovers without fear
May sit alone, and say whate'er they please.
Death, envious death, beheld what bliss was near,
Death, envious death, my opening hopes made cease,
And kill'd their promise with his cruel spear.

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XLIII.

"*Quel rosignuol, che si soave piagne,*" &c.

THIS nightingale so sweetly that complains
For its lost young perhaps, or partner dear,
Filling the Heaven with music, and the plains,
With notes so piteous, so soft, so clear,
Through the long night accompanies my pains,
And still reminds me of my doom severe!
Yet could my folly look for other gains
Forgetting death's supreme dominion here?
How easy to deceive a man secure!
Who would have thought those eyes of beauteous light,
Those living suns, could sink in cloud obscure?
My bitter lot, alas! is now too sure,
To live and weep for every past delight,
And, weeping, learn that none can long endure!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XLIV.

"*Né per sereno cielo ir vaghe stelle,*" &c.

O NOT to see the stars of Heaven serene,
Or, ships calm gliding on the quiet sea,
Or, light-arm'd knights on field careering free,
Or, wild deer sporting gay in woody scene:
O not to hear, long-look'd-for good has been,
Or, love's soft lays in skilful melody,
Or, songs of ladies fair as fair may be,
By murmuring fountain on some pleasant green:
O none of these can to my buried heart
(Buried with her, who, while she liv'd, was light
And gladness to my eyes,) ever impart
The least emotion of renew'd delight!
To see her once again, would I could part
From weary life, or would she ne'er had met my sight!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XLV.

" Passato è'l tempo omai, lasso, che tantò," &c.

Ah gone for ever are the happy years
That sooth'd my soul amid love's fiercest fire,
And she for whom I wept and tun'd my lyre
Has gone, alas!—But left my lyre, my tears:
Gone is that face, whose holy look endears,
But in my heart, ere yet it did retire,
Left the sweet radiance of its eyes, entire;
My heart? Ah! no, not mine! for to the spheres
Of light she bore it captive, soaring high,
In angel robe triumphant, and now stands
Crown'd with the laurel wreath of chastity:
O could I throw aside these earthly bands
That tie me down where wretched mortals sigh,—
To join blest spirits in celestial lands!—

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LII.

" *Sento l'aura mia antica, e i dolci colli,*" &c.

ONCE more I feel the well-known breezes blow,
Once more I see the lovely hills appear
That were, as long as Heaven ordain'd, the sphere
Where shone the light of all my life, below:
These tears my ruin'd hopes too plainly shew!
Faded the trees, the streams no more are clear;
Cold the sweet nest that was her dwelling here,
Alive or dead where most I long'd to go!
O 'twas my hope in these dear shades to find,
And from her eyes shedding a softer gleam,
Some respite from the woes that wore my mind!
Hard is the master I have serv'd, I deem:
While glow'd my fire, I burn'd beneath its beam,
Now o'er its scatter'd ashes weep me blind!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LIII.

" E questo 'l nido, in che la mia Fenice," &c.

Is this the nest in which her wings of gold,
Of gold and purple plume, my phœnix laid?
How flutter'd my fond heart beneath their shade!
But now its sighs proclaim that dwelling cold:
Sweet source! from which my bliss, my bane have roll'd,
Where is that face, in living light array'd,
That burn'd me, yet my sole enjoyment made?
Unparallel'd on earth, the heavens now hold
Thee blest!—but I am left wretched, alone!
Yet ever in my grief return to see
And honour this sweet place, though thou art gone.
A black night veils the hills, whence rising free
Thou tookst thy heaven-ward flight! Ah! when they shone
In morning radiance, it was all from thee!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LV.

"*Or hai fatto l'estremo di tua possa,*" &c.

O cruel Death, thou now hast done thy worst,
Impoverish'd sweet Love's delicious reign,
Stript beauty of the flower that made her vain,
And clos'd the light of life in grave accurst:
Now thou hast robb'd my being, foully burst
Its bright, encircling, gem-enchased chain:
But fame, but worth, which ever shall remain,
Are not thy prey: Take, what for thee were nurst,
The naked bones! Heaven now has got the rest,
And the pure splendour of that living sun
Spreads a new joy through regions of the blest!
How lasts the glory which the good have won!
Sweet angel! of thy victory possest
There let thy pity shine, as here thy beauty shone!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LVI.

" *L'aura, e l'odore, e'l refrigerio, e l'ombra,*" &c.

THE fragrant gale, and the refreshing shade
Of my sweet laurel, and its verdant form,
That were my shelter in life's weary storm,
Have felt the power that makes all nature fade:
Now has my light been lost in gloomy shade,
E'en as the sun behind his sister's form:
I call for death to free me from death's storm,
But love descends and brings me better aid!
He tells me, lady, that one moment's sleep
Alone was thine, and then thou didst awake
Among the elect, and in thy Maker's arms:
And if my verse oblivion's power can keep
Aloof, thy name its place on earth will take
Where Genius still will dote upon thy charms!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LVII.

" *L'ultimo, lasso, de' miei giorni allegri,*" &c.

AH me! the last of all my happy days
(Not many happy days my years can shew,)
Was come! I felt my heart as turn'd to snow,
Presage, perhaps, that happiness decays!
E'en as the man whose shivering frame betrays,
And fluttering pulse, the ague's coming blow,
'Twas thus I felt!—but could I therefore know
How soon would end the bliss that never stays?
Those eyes that now, in Heaven's delicious light,
Drink in pure beams which life and glory rain,
Just as they left mine, blinded, sunk in night,
Seem'd thus to say, sparkling unwonted bright,—
Awhile, beloved friends, in peace remain,
O we shall yet elsewhere exchange fond looks again!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LVIII.

" *O giorno, O ora, O ultimo momento,*" &c.

O day, O hour, O moment sweetest, last,
O stars conspir'd to make me poor indeed!
O look too true, in which I seem'd to read,
At parting, that my happiness was past:
Now my full loss I know, I feel at last;
Then I believ'd (ah! weak and idle creed!)
'Twas but a part alone I lost; instead,
Was there a hope that flew not with the blast?
For, even then, it was in Heaven ordain'd,
That the sweet light of all my life should die:
'Twas written in her sadly pensive eye!
But mine unconscious of the truth remain'd;
Or, what it would not see, to see refrain'd,
That I might sink in sudden misery!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LX.

" *Ite, rime dolenti, al duro sasso,*" &c.

Go to the tomb, my mournful measures, go,
That hides my treasure in its cruel womb,
And call on her who has in Heaven her home,
But leaves her mortal part in mansion low:
Tell her, my weary bark sails on in woe
Where dash life's waves their melancholy foam!
Her scatter'd leaves I gather, as I roam,
Tracing her footsteps, heavily and slow:
She ever is my theme, alive or dead,
(O living still and in immortal bloom!)
So is she known and lov'd by all mankind:
Then to receive me may her arms be spread,
(I soon shall follow her), and, as her doom
Has been in Heaven, such be it mine to find!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LXIII.

" Tornami a mente, anzi v'e dentro quella," &c.

O to my soul for ever she returns;
Or rather Lethe could not blot her thence,
Such as she was when first she struck my sense,
In that bright blushing age when beauty burns:
So still I see her, bashful as she turns
Retir'd into herself, as from offence:
I cry—'tis she! she still has life and sense:
O speak to me, my love!—Sometimes she spurns
My call; sometimes she seems to answer straight;
Then, starting from my waking dream, I say,—
Alas! poor wretch, thou art of mind bereft!
Forgetst thou the first hour of the sixth day
Of April, the three hundred, forty eight,
And thousandth year,—when she her earthly mansion left?

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET LXXII.

" *Ripensando a quel, ch' oggi il cielo onora,*" &c.

To that soft look which now adorns the skies,
The graceful bending of the radiant head,
The face, the sweet angelic accents fled,
That sooth'd me once, but now awake my sighs:
O! when to these imagination flies,
I wonder that I am not long since dead!
'Tis she supports me, for her heavenly tread
Is round my couch when morning visions rise!
In every attitude, how holy, chaste!
How tenderly she seems to hear the tale
Of my long woes, and their relief to seek!
But, when day breaks she then appears in haste
The well-known heaven-ward path again to scale,
With moisten'd eye, and soft expressive cheek!

PETRARCH, BOOK II. SONNET XC.

"*Vago augelletto, che cantando vai,*" &c.

O GENTLE bird! that pour'st thy sweet complaint
For that the cheerful months of spring are past,
And winter's dreary nights approaching fast,
The shortening days begin to droop and faint;
Knew'st thou the kindred griefs my peace that taint,
As well as of thine own thou knowledge hast,
O thou wouldst fly into this wretch's breast,
And share his sighs, and answer plaint with plaint.
Our shares indeed might much unequal be;
She whom thou mournst perhaps may not be dead;
Ah! death and Heaven have left no hopes for me!
Yet, by the dismal season, I am led
To hold this melancholy talk with thee
Of bitter years to come, of sweet years fled.

CANZONE FROM PETRARCH.

"*Italia mia benche 'l parlar sia indarno,*" &c.

O my lov'd Italy, though words in vain
Would seek the wounds to cure,
Thy beauteous form is destin'd to endure,
Yet let me try the strain
Which suits the notes of woe,
From Arno and the Po,
Murmuring melancholy through thy plain!
On their banks I wander slow,
And bid my supplications flow
To thee, most gracious ruler of the skies,
That the same pity, which before
Brought thee to mortal shore,
Would to thy chosen land now bend thine eyes!
Behold, O blessed Lord,
The cruel wars abhorr'd,
From every slight occasion that arise:

O from our harden'd hearts
Draw out the stony parts
On which is whetted war's destructive sword;
And, soft as new-born child,
With pity make them mild,
That all may listen while my tongue imparts
(Rude though the preacher be,) thy true eternal
word.

O ye into whose hands fortune has plac'd
The bridle which commands
Those matchless, but, by you, unpitied lands;
Why are they thus laid waste
By foreign swords? their green,
Why is it bloody seen?
To your own ruin thoughtlessly ye haste!
When has faith e'er steady been
In men of venal heart and mean?
The prince, whose fawning numbers most abound
With more numerous foes, alone
Has girt his hated throne,

Short is your foresight, though ye think it sound!
Good Heaven! what deluge roars,
From foreign fatal shores,
Spreading its ruin on our fields around,
O'er all our lovely plains!
And what for us remains
To guard us from the torrent as it pours?
If our own hands have brew'd
The deadly pois'nous flood,
And spread it round with all its shameful stains,
Who can protection bring, or hope to heal our
sores?

With kind intention to defend our soil,
Nature the Alps did place
Between our regions and that savage race:
In vain was all her toil,
For furious blind desire
Has set our souls on fire,
And breath'd the madness of its base turmoil!

When to one cage both retire,
Wild beasts and tame, do not inquire
Which shall most suffer in the cruel den!
And that we may afflict us more,
The lawless nation bore
Worthy descendants! these detested men,
Which Marius gor'd in flank,
(The memory still is rank)
How can it be, but they must hate us then?
'Twas on that splendid day
When stream'd their blood away,
And fatten'd all the meadows as it sank:
When they would taste the wave
'Twas blood alone it gave;
With blood alone their thirst they could allay,
No water could they find, blood, blood alone
they drank!

Why tell of Cæsar too, their native fields
Who moisten'd from their veins,
Which his stern sword, unknown to pity, drains?

—Some evil star now yields,
(For Heaven has turn'd away
And left us all a prey:)
Yields to the havoc your dissension builds.
Ah! your dark designs betray
To sudden and too sure decay,
The loveliest portion of earth's peopled clime!
Why load with burdens your own poor,
Make misery more endure,
Yet spurn their offer'd services sublime?
Why gather o'er your land
Armies from foreign strand,
To sell their blood and purchase gold with crime?
O not for rude rebuke
This ardent strain I took
But 'tis to speak what truth doth give command!
None trust me more exempt
From hatred or contempt,
Therefore my words you may with patience brook:
But for his country none will more undaunted
stand!

For is it not the land I touch'd the first,
O is it not the nest
In which my tender infant limbs had rest,
Where I was sweetly nurst?
O did not duty's flame,
At my lov'd country's name,
Kindle my strong conceptions till they burst,
Rising from their graves, for shame,
My buried parents would disclaim
All part in their degraded offspring, then!
Were your's this patriotic mind,
(Would that it were!) inclin'd
You needs must be to pity helpless men,
Who upon you alone
Depend, (next to the throne
Of God,)—so would you wipe their tears again!
How would their bosoms glow
Then 'gainst the foreign foe!
Then the Italian spirit would be shewn;
Valour would soon subdue
Blind fury and its crew;

Their blood would freely for your kingdoms flow,
And that you reign o'er men would speedily be
known.

Think, noble sirs, that time runs fast along,
That life flies swift away,
And death is ever watching for his prey!
Then, as you cannot long
Be here, but must depart,
Think, that no human heart
Can look for bliss from robbery and wrong,
When its long-lov'd earthly dress
The spirit quits in nakedness,
And wanders solitary down the path
Where, in the doubtful vale below,
No happiness can flow
From bitter deeds of violence and wrath!
O then with gentler thought
Let nobler aims be sought!
(Such blessed purpose no repentance hath!)

Bid science, learning, pour
Their treasures on your shore,
Not foreign arms, but foreign arts be brought!
'Tis so your names will rise
In praises to the skies:
So you will here have every bliss in store,
And Heaven's rewards at last shall be your happy lot!

My song, thy thought with courteous skill convey:
For thou art going among haughty lords,
Who the bad usage of the times obey
And must be won to listen to thy words:
Ah! small the hope this harden'd age affords!
Yet some attentive spirits will be found
Who will hear truth, and nobly sheathe their swords:
Bid these prevent thy voice from being drown'd,
While, peace, peace, blessed peace, thou shoutest all around.

STORY OF UGOLINO,

FROM DANTE'S INFERNO.

WERE my rude rhymes as rugged, rough, and harsh,
As the o'erhanging rocks, whose horror stood
Around the margin of that murky marsh,
Then might I chew, in hope, bright fancy's food;
But, since my purpose cannot be made good,
With fear and trembling each weak verse I frame!
O can it be that one of human blood,
Whose tongue first stammer'd out a parent's name,
Should of that black abyss the secrets strange proclaim?

Assist me, then, ye ladies of the lyre;
Give to my verse your own dread energy,
E'en as Amphion's ye could once inspire,
Which girded Thebes with towers and turrets high:
So shall my song with its great subject vie!
Ah! wretched race! in that infernal den
(For which in vain appropriate terms I try,)
That next I met; much happier had ye been
Made sheep or goats at first,—or any thing but men!

When we had reach'd the low and gloomy pond
Beneath the giant sentinels, whose seat
Was on the fencing rock, which still I conn'd
With up-turn'd eyes,—I heard a voice repeat
Beside me,—Take care where you set your feet,
Lest you should crush some wretched brother's head,
And, with hard heels, his face all rudely beat!
I turn'd, and saw before me where was spread
A mighty frozen lake, that seem'd like glass or lead.

Never as yet did winter's ruffian force
Wrap Austrian Danaw in such mantle bleak,
Nor so enchain the Tanais in its course:
Not, on that lake were massy Tabernique
To fall, or vast Pietrapana's peak,
Would from the margin of its icy floor,
One running rent be heard to growl and creak:
And, (in the season, when, their little store
To heap, the female gleaners o'er the corn fields pour:)

E'en in that season, as a group of frogs,
From green and slimy pool, push forth the snout,
While ceaseless croaking murmurs o'er the bogs:
So, with dull livid cheeks, were sticking out,
Above the glassy surface, all about,
Sad faces of the damn'd. Their teeth they gnash'd
Like to the stork's bill clattering, as they lout
With downcast looks:—the cold their lips had gash'd,
And from their weeping eyes despair's black ensigns flash'd.

I pass'd along, and saw in one dark bed,
Two frozen heads, one on the other plac'd,
Like as a cap is fitted to a head:
And, as the hungry gnaw their bread in haste,
So did the one above, the lower taste
With biting fangs, and where it met the nape
(Thus might the marks of Tydeus' teeth be trac'd
On Menalippus' skull) the griesly shape
On that tormented scalp had fix'd its frantic gape!

"O thou, who, with such signs of bestial rage,
Disclosest hatred to thy sad compeer,
Tell me the cause, (said I,) and I engage,
If just thine indignation shall appear,
To recompense thee in that upper sphere,
Telling the story of his deadly sin,
If still my tongue its office well shall bear."
From his foul feast he rose, and did begin
(First, on the mangled head, wiping his mouth
and chin,)

To speak: "The thought sits heavy at my heart
Of the black tale of woes thou wouldst renew,
(Even before my words have had a part:)
Yet, if disgrace more deeply may accrue
To that vile wretch, on whom my teeth pursue
Their bloody game, my story shall have way
Among my tears, howe'er the task I rue:
I was Count Ugolino in my day,
Archbishop Ruggier this, whom you behold my prey.

I trusted to him, (thence his guilt begins)
And, to his honour, gave myself a thrall,
(The drift of his malicious cunning sins:)
You know, my death succeeded soon my fall;
But its sad circumstances may not all
Have reach'd your ear,—these when I shall relate,
Say, if I be too bitter in my gall!—
—The morning beam had enter'd at the grate
Of the dark dungeon, nam'd of famine, from my fate;

(Others shall yet its iron horrors taste)
I was asleep, and had a dismal dream,
Which the events to come before me plac'd!
This wretch a huntsman to my thought did seem,
Who, to the mountain that obstructs the beam
From Pisa, and the view of Lucca town,
Pursued a wolf and its young cubs; nor deem
The Lanfrancs and the Sismonds were unknown
Among the cheering rout that fiercely ran them down

With well-train'd dogs, whose sides were pinch'd and lean:
In a short course the wild beast and its young
Were wearied out, and torn with tusks that keen
Were buried in their sides.—From sleep I sprung:—
I heard my slumb'ring babes, with whining tongue
Call out for bread! Thy heart must sure be steel,
If, at this dire recital, 'tis not wrung!
What, at that moment did my bosom feel?
Tears at this tale must flow, if any tears are real!

Well, they awoke! and now the hour drew nigh
When our accustom'd meal was to be set:
They all had dreamt like me, and felt hope die!
I heard below, the door bolts, as they met,
Close the tremendous tower:—they told our fate!
On my poor babes I gaz'd; but spoke no word,
And dropt no tear; like flint my soul was set:
They wept; and Anselmuccio implor'd
Me thus:—Why look so at us; why are you so
stirr'd

My father?—Not yet, not yet could I weep,
Nor all that day, nor all the following night
Utter'd reply: and now the day did peep
Once more into our dungeon of affright:
I saw their haggard faces, and the sight
So mov'd me, that I gnaw'd my hands in grief!
Poor things, they thought 'twas hunger made me
bite,
And said,—If thus you may obtain relief,
Why not take our flesh, father? you will be no
thief,

For 'tis your own: better to be your food
Than thus to see you hunger!—So, to keep
Them quiet, with collected strength I stood.
One day,—another, past; and silence deep
Prevail'd. O wherefore did thy yawning steep
Open not, earth, to swallow us? 'Twas now
The fourth sad morning: Gaddo then did creep
And laid him at my feet, and said—I go,
Help, father!—So he died; and so I saw in woe,

Wan as you see me here, the other three
Drop one by one from th' fifth to the sixth day:
Then (hunger made me now too blind to see,)
I grop'd among their bodies as they lay,
For two days still, their names repeating aye!
At last my sorrows, even than hunger, more,
Destroy'd me."—Saying thus, upon his prey
With cruel eyes he flew, and, as he tore
Like greedy hound the skull, his mouth ran down
with gore!

THE END.

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